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National Preparedness Month 2006

Take Time to Be Aware and Prepare

By Barbara Fox

The unpredictable threat of an emergency – from a catastrophic flood or tornado to an influenza pandemic – makes it essential that we prepare our homes, businesses and schools for the unexpected. There isn't a better time to do this than during September – National Preparedness Month (NPM).

Observed each September since 2004, NPM is a nationwide effort to increase public awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies and to encourage individuals to take action to prepare.

September is an ideal time for families to update their emergency disaster supply kits and family emergency plans, and to become better informed about different threats and local emergency plans. Because many things change during the course of a year, it is imperative the entire family have current emergency contact information and a family communications plan as they head back to school and work.

In the commonwealth, the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) has teamed up with the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security (KOHS) to promote family emergency preparedness and to encourage Kentuckians to take action, with numerous preparedness events occurring across the state this month.

The state is nearing completion of an updated state pandemic influenza readiness plan, which incorporates strategies that were recently developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and outlines how DPH will coordinate with local, state and federal agencies, as well as other stakeholders to work in a coordinated and collaborative manner to ensure an effective overall response.

A series of statewide workshops addressing how to reach vulnerable populations during a public health emergency will be held during the week of Sept. 11-14. The Kentucky Outreach and Information Network (KOIN), a grassroots emergency information network, was established by DPH and the Cabinet Communications Office to convey important information to special populations in Kentucky who may be hard to reach, vulnerable or at risk in a disaster or emergency.

During this month, DPH and KOHS want to encourage every Kentuckian to get a disaster supply kit, make an emergency plan, be informed and get involved. Disasters will happen, but by preparing for them and working together, we can help to minimize the impact they will have on our lives.

For more information on family emergency preparedness in Kentucky, visit the state's readiness Web site, www.ProtectYourFamily.ky.gov. More information on public health preparedness efforts in the state can be found at www.chfs.ky.gov/dph/epi/preparedness.

Preparedness Spotlight: Peggy Ware, Branch Manager, Public Health Preparedness

In recognition of National Preparedness Month, Focus chats with Peggy Ware, R.N., B.S.N., manager of the Public Health Preparedness Branch in the Division of Epidemiology and Health Planning in the Department for Public Health. Ware has been a nurse for 32 years, 27 of those in public health. In this interview, Ware describes how public and



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personal preparedness are important to citizens of the commonwealth.

Ware: Prior to coming to DPH in 1997, I was the nurse administrator at the Franklin County Health Department. I first began working in public health preparedness in 1998 when I was assigned to provide technical assistance to local health departments on emergency operations planning. Then, in 2001, as a result of Sept. 11, state public health departments received federal funding to build public health infrastructure and preparedness capacities and the Public Health Preparedness Branch was created.

How does your job allow you to impact the lives of your fellow Kentuckians? What's the best part of your job?

Working in emergency preparedness gives all of the folks in our branch and many other individuals in the department an opportunity to impact the lives of our fellow Kentuckians. We work daily to make sure medical and public health systems are in place to manage events involving bioterrorism, infectious disease outbreaks like pandemic influenza, large scale natural disasters, and other public health threats and emergencies. Preparedness staff collaborates with other emergency response partners who work together to ensure systems are in place to meet the needs of the population during a large scale emergency. In addition, we partner with other states to share public health and medical resources. The best part of my job is working with the preparedness team. Everyone can be counted on to get the job done no matter how far he or she has to travel or how long the job takes.

Tell us about National Preparedness Month and what you think the average citizen should do during the month to get prepared.

The Department for Public Health has partnered with the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security and the Kentucky Department of Military Affairs

to promote National Preparedness Month (NPM). This year's goals of NPM are to increase public awareness about the importance of family emergency preparedness and to urge individuals to make themselves and their loved ones better prepared to deal with disasters and emergency situations. You will be hearing a lot about preparedness during September. This will be a good opportunity to develop family preparedness plans and gather emergency preparedness supplies.

How do you assemble a preparedness kit? What are the basic supplies we should have?

The best thing for individuals to do is go to one of these Web sites. All provide information on personal and family preparedness: www.ready.gov; www.redcross.org; www.cdc.gov; www.citizencorps.gov; www.fema.gov; www.fema.gov/kids. And don't forget our own Web site: chfs.ky.gov/preparedness. The most important thing in developing your family emergency preparedness plan is communication. Every member of the family needs to be involved so that when a disaster strikes, everyone will know what to do.

How are you prepared, personally, for an emergency?

My family gets to hear all of this 24/7. We have a family emergency kit and I try to keep extra non-perishable food and water in good supply. I think the hardest thing to do is have a good plan for getting in touch with family members if everyone is away from home when a disaster strikes. During large scale events, cell phone lines may become jammed. How are you going to get in touch with you family? A good idea is to ask an out-of-area friend or relative to be your family contact. It is often easier to call long distance following a disaster. Additionally pick two places to meet; one right outside your home in a designated area in case of fire; another

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outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number. And don't forget to review your plan bi-annually.

DPH Keeps Food and Milk Safe at State Fair

The smells of corn dogs, cotton candy, steak and pork chop sandwiches permeated the Kentucky State Fair, enticing patrons and adding to the festivity of the event. But for the 46 food inspectors charged with ensuring food safety practices were maintained throughout the event, the State Fair was all work and no play.

This year, inspectors from the Louisville Metro Health Department, federal Food and Drug Administration and state Department for Public Health teamed up to conduct approximately 2,350 health inspections at the fair.

The team used thermometers, test kits, flashlights and a keen eye to help ensure the safety of the hundreds of thousands of pounds of food and milk stored, prepared and consumed during the fair.

"Close to 700,000 citizens attend this crown jewel of state fairs in Louisville each year, and we wanted to make sure each one had a wonderful, safe, healthy trip and safe return home," said Guy Delius, assistant director with the Cabinet's Division of Public Health Protection and Safety. "Our food safety staff inspected each of the approximately 200 food vendors on the fair grounds each day for a number of food safety issues."

Christine Atkinson, manager of the Cabinet's Food Safety Branch, said inspectors checked food cooking and holding temperatures, employee hygiene and hand washing, cleanliness of the food production unit, refrigeration, dish washing, insect prevention methods, and many other factors that play a role in the safety of food.

Staff maintained an office on the midway and the dairy production arena to better respond to any concerns or issues that arose during the fair.

"The state fair is very important to Kentucky and the health of our citizens is very important to us," said Clyde Bolton, director of the Division of Public Health Protection and Safety.

Are you still getting 5 A Day?

By CHFS Wellness Committee

Last year at this time, many of you had just completed the 5 A DAY Challenge. So, how are you doing now? Is 5 A DAY still part of your daily routine?

Last year's challenge was a success. More than 43 percent of participants met the challenge by eating at least 35 servings of fruits and vegetables for at least one week during the challenge. Forty percent of participants improved their fruit and vegetable intake as a result of the challenge.

During the challenge, we learned the benefits of fruits and vegetables, such as reduced risk for cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension, birth defects and many more. Quite a few of the challenge participants even noticed weight loss because of new eating habits.

If you've slacked off on meeting the recommended intake of fruits and vegetables, now is a great time to recommit yourself.

Remember these tips for getting 5 A DAY:

- Include fruits and vegetables with every meal and snack.
- Keep frozen and canned fruits and vegetables available as easy additions to dinner. Try adding some frozen peas to a pasta dish or some beans to a soup.
- Carry fresh fruit, dried fruit such as trail mix, a box of raisins, baby carrots or

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other fresh and raw vegetables to eat when you feel a hunger pang.

- Add chopped vegetables (spinach, carrots, etc.) to spaghetti sauce.
- Add chopped vegetables to macaroni and cheese.

Make 5 A DAY a lifetime commitment and watch the Focus for updated 5 A DAY information in the fall.

New Computer Purchase Forms Online

The Office of Information Technology has developed a new set of forms for purchasing computers and IT related products and services. The two new forms are posted on the CHFS Intranet site at

<http://chfsnet.ky.gov/afa/oit/forms.htm>

To purchase new computers, use the Computer Routing Slip/156 form. For your convenience, this form includes a feature that enables you to select from the approved computer and accessories list.

The second form covers other IT-related items including service requests, printers, software, phone systems, IT system support contracts and renewals. The forms also include eMARS billing code pick lists to aid in proper cost accounting. An instruction form is included for each form.

Effective immediately, all IT-related purchase requests should be requested via the new forms. For questions or to provide feedback on how we can continue to improve our procurement forms, please contact David Stephanski in OIT at 564-6478, ext. 4527, or e-mail DavidA.Stephanski@ky.gov.

Lunch & Learn, Sept. 12

Suicide and depression awareness and prevention

In observance of National Suicide Prevention Week Sept. 10-16, the CHFS Wellness

Committee will offer a special Lunch & Learn session focusing on suicide and depression awareness and prevention.

Kentucky has the 12th-highest rate of suicide in the nation, with about 500 Kentuckians committing suicide each year. In 2003, suicide deaths outnumbered homicides 3 to 1. In Kentucky, suicide is the second-leading cause of death for people 15-34; the third most frequent cause of death for children and youths age 10-14; and the number four cause of death among people ages 35-54.

“Experts believe most suicidal individuals do not want to die, they just want to end the pain they are experiencing,” said Jason Padgett, the state’s suicide prevention coordinator. “According to the American Association of Suicidology, when suicidal intent or risk is detected early, lives can be saved.”

Padgett and Barbara Kaminer with the Department for Mental Health/Mental Retardation’s Substance Abuse Services, will lead the Lunch & Learn session, emphasizing suicide and depression warning signs and risk factors. Information on self-screening also will be provided and the audience will have an opportunity to ask questions.

Make plans now to attend his important Lunch & Learn session Sept. 12 from noon to 1 p.m. in the CHR Building Cafeteria Conference Room. Bring your own lunch or pick up a healthy meal in the CHFS Café.

Get Ready for KECC BINGO

Get out your lucky dolls and BINGO daubers.

By popular demand, KECC BINGO is back for this year’s state employee charitable campaign. The rules have changed a bit from last year, so be sure to review them before you play. Results of the two daily number draws will be sent to

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players by e-mail, so be sure your KECC coordinator has your e-mail address when you purchase your BINGO cards (limit of three cards per player). Winners will call "BINGO" by being the first to e-mail their card solutions to the game coordinator, [Rebecca Aufderhar](#). Buy cards from your KECC coordinator or drop by Rebecca's office at 3C-G in the CHR Building. Cards will be available for sale starting today.

KECC BINGO is a great and fun way to support the Cabinet's charitable campaign efforts. For more information, contact [Amberlee Nickell](#).

KECC BINGO Rules

Game Cards:

- Individuals can purchase up to three game cards from their KECC coordinator.
- The cost of each card is \$2 with all proceeds going to KECC.
- Make sure you write your name and extension number on your cards for BINGO clarification and prize distribution.
- Each KECC coordinator will be responsible for e-mailing the list of participants to Rebecca Aufderhar, so she can e-mail these participants the BINGO numbers.
- Please utilize a highlighter for blotting your BINGO numbers.
- Drawings for BINGO numbers will occur each morning and afternoon.
- Four BINGO numbers will be selected each day and e-mailed out to the participants.
- Please make sure your KECC coordinator has your name if you are participating to ensure you get the e-mail.

Progressive BINGO Game (using the same BINGO cards for all three games):

- First game will be a Regular BINGO (using the FREE Space).

- Consists of any BINGO that is across, up/down or diagonal
- Winner will be determined by whoever is the first to notify Rebecca Aufderhar via e-mail at Rebecca.Aufderhar@ky.gov. The time stamp on these e-mails will determine order of clarification of BINGO.
- Once the winner has been determined, the first prize will be awarded.

Second Game will be a Kite BINGO (using the FREE Space)

- Using the same BINGO cards from the First Game, you will now try to get a KITE Bingo, which consists of any four corner postage stamp and a diagonal line.
- Winner will be determined by whoever is the first to notify Rebecca Aufderhar via e-mail. The time stamp on these e-mails will determine order of clarification of BINGO.
- Once the winner has been determined, the second prize will be awarded.

Third Game will be a Coverall BINGO (using the FREE Space)

- Using the same BINGO cards from the first and second games, participants will now try to get a Coverall BINGO, meaning all squares are used.
- Winner will be determined by whoever is the first to notify Rebecca Aufderhar via e-mail. The time stamp on these e-mails will determine order of clarification of BINGO.
- Once the winner has been determined, the grand prize will be awarded.

Swimming Smart

DPH Program Keeps Kentuckians Safe

Jan Brown knows her way around a swimming pool.

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The career path of Brown, a former medical laboratory technologist, eventually directed her to her local health department and eventually to the Kentucky Department for Public Health's Division of Public Health Protection and Safety. Along the way, she discovered she had a knack for pools.

"Much of the general public swims in public facilities. We make sure these facilities are safe," said Brown, who now runs the state Public Swimming and Bathing Facilities Program. "We don't want kids to get hurt because of the way a pool is constructed and we don't want them to get sick due to the conditions of the water. Our program goal is to help prevent accidents and disease transmission."

Anyone who considers building a public swimming facility should be familiar with the program. The Public Pool and Bathing Facility Program regulates any facility outside of single-family residential swimming pools, including swimming pools at private clubs and public beaches.

All facilities must meet state code before opening to the general public, a survey process that starts when plans are initially designed.

Before facilities are constructed, developers must submit all plans to their local health department, which will forward them to the state Division of Plumbing for review and then on to Brown. From there, Brown checks to make sure plans call for proper safety measures from filtration to chlorine treatment systems.

Once plans have been approved, installation of filtration pipes can begin. An on-site visit to ensure that pipes meet state regulations is completed early on and a final site visit is made when all construction has been finished.

After final approval, the local health department will begin conducting routine monthly inspections of the facility to check water quality, filtration operability and other health and safety measures.

Though public beaches differ, Brown must also approve plans before construction can begin. Regulations call for a uniform slope; sand or gravel to prevent muddy deposits; a clearly designated swimming area marked with rope; signs designating the shallow area; safety equipment; water quality assurance; and a sanitary survey of the area and local tributaries.

The Public Swimming and Bathing Facility Program is guided by standards set by the National Sanitation Foundation and is intended to prevent injury and disease transmission in Kentucky's public swimming facilities.

OIG Hosts National Conference

The Office of the Inspector General, Division of Fraud, Waste, and Abuse/Identification and Prevention (DFWAIP), which serves as Medicaid's Program Integrity Unit, hosted the 22nd Annual NASO (the national Medicaid Program Integrity organization) conference Aug. 20-23, at the Marriott Griffin Gate Resort in Lexington.

Kentucky was offered the opportunity to host the 2006 conference during the 2005 NASO conference in Columbus, Ohio. DFWAIP staff, particularly Rolande Cummins, worked diligently throughout the year, planning the conference agenda, arranging accommodations and travel, and planning social events at the Red Mile and Keeneland.

DFWAIP staff moderated conference sessions, assisted in registering guests and attended important program sessions. Director Zach Ramsey served as the host-state representative and co-presented along with the KASPER team

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on the OIG's model KASPER system, which is being integrated with Medicaid data to combat over-utilization of prescription drugs.

This year's conference boasted record-breaking attendance of 260 Medicaid Program Integrity representatives from 46 state programs, as well as governing federal agencies and vendors. This was achieved despite the closure of the Lexington airport over the weekend, which forced the re-routing of most attendees through Louisville and Cincinnati.

The conference was a huge success and many veteran attendees said it was NASO's best to date. Inspector General Robert Benvenuti highlighted Medicaid program integrity administration within a separate agency (OIG), a growing trend among states. OIG staff was provided with an excellent opportunity to network and exchange best practices with state and federal agencies in addition to previewing various software and programs showcased by vendors.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better focus on team building, customer service and personal development.



How much of your work week is lost because of needless interruptions? Some interruptions can be good – they allow us to help a customer, give us new information to help us do our jobs or may give us a brief laugh. But many interruptions result in a waste of precious time.

Dr. Donald E. Wetmore, a Connecticut speaker and time management consultant, says that people can lose as much as 35 percent of their work time to the “black hole” of interruptions.

Many “bad” interruptions are from co-workers who ask you for help with something they could probably figure out on their own. By assisting staff with these inquiries, you are encouraging them to continue interrupting you with the same type of questions, Wetmore says.

Teach your co-workers to learn how to help themselves. Over time, they will have the confidence to find answers without troubling you.

Wetmore said if you can stop even a few bad interruptions, you can save time for your own assignments that would otherwise have to be pushed back. And, Wetmore says, you'll also experience less stress.